



OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

PO BOX 202501
HELENA MT 59620-2501
www.opi.state.mt.us
(406) 444-3095
(888) 231-9393
(406) 444-0169 (TTY)

Linda McCulloch
Superintendent

September 1, 2005

To: OPI MASS Representatives

From: Madalyn Quinlan, Chief of Staff

Subject: Summary of OPI Activities for September 2005

Here is a summary of the current activities at the Office of Public Instruction for September 2005. This summary can also be found at www.opi.state.mt.us/MASSUpdates/. If you would like to be added to a Listserv to receive the Summary of OPI Activities each month, please register at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/regforms/OPIActivities/>.

Office of the State Superintendent

Highlights of State Superintendent Linda McCulloch's Activities for the Summer 2005:

- Met with a representative of the Montana Nurses Association regarding workforce training in the health care field
- Spoke to the Title I Migrant Education teachers at their annual training
- Met with a representative from early childhood organizations to discuss school readiness issues
- Hosted the 2005 Montana Girls State Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Attended P-20 Leadership Meetings and OPI Cabinet meetings
- Addressed the AmeriCorps literacy volunteers at their graduation ceremony in Missoula
- Participated in a panel discussion on policy at the Indian Education for All Institute at UM
- Attended the Center for Digital Education Performance Improvement Summit in Missoula
- Attended the meetings of the Land Board, Quality Schools Interim Committee, Board of Public Education, and state government's Information Technology Board
- Spoke to the First Grade Academy in Billings
- Spoke to the School Food Services Conference in Great Falls
- Gave keynote speech to the Oklahoma Indian Education Conference at the University of Oklahoma in Norman, OK
- Attended the presentation of the book, *The Salish People and the Lewis & Clark Expedition* to the Salish-Pend d'Oreille Elders Cultural Advisory Council in Arlee
- Participated in the Indian Education Curriculum meeting
- Greeted the Ambassador of Kyrgystan and her family on behalf of Montana's schools
- Participated in a meeting of the American Indian Task Force, sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers
- Traveled to Heart Butte and met with administration, trustees and community members
- Spoke to new school administrators at the New Leaders Conference
- Greeted the Blue Ribbon Panel members who were working on nominations for the Superintendent's Talent Pool
- Met with representatives of the Department of Defense regarding the placement of the ASVAB test in Montana schools

"It is our mission to advocate, communicate, educate and be accountable to those we serve."

- Participated in the ribbon cutting of the Jurassic Journey Dinosaur Exhibit at the Western Montana Fair
- Met with representatives of The College Board regarding Montana student achievement on PSAT, SAT and AP tests
- Met with representatives of the American College Testing (ACT) Service regarding Montana student achievement on ACT tests
- Served on a panel addressing school funding for a series on the Montana Constitution, sponsored by the Center for the Rocky Mountain West at the University of Montana
- Announced Adequate Yearly Progress results for Montana schools
- Participated in numerous television, radio and newspaper interviews
- Participated in a press conference to celebrate women's right to vote on the 75th anniversary of the passage of the 19th amendment to the US Constitution
- Attended a meeting of the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation Board
- Met with representatives of the Montana Hospital Association regarding health occupations
- Welcomed federal education staff who were reviewing the Montana Deaf-Blind Project

Everall Fox Named Director of Indian Education

State Superintendent Linda McCulloch is pleased to announce that Everall Fox has accepted the position of Director of Indian Education for the Office of Public Instruction. In this position, Everall will direct OPI's efforts to implement Indian Education for All and oversee the development of curriculum materials for all Montana students to learn about the unique cultural heritage of Montana's Indian tribes. Working with OPI colleagues and Montana educators, the Division of Indian Education will also work on strategies to close the achievement gap for American Indian students in Montana. Previously, Everall has served at OPI as the Indian Education Specialist and the GEAR UP Program Specialist/Grant Manager. Please join Superintendent McCulloch in welcoming Everall to his new position. OPI Contact: Everall Fox, Director of Indian Education, 444-3013.

Jan Lombardi Accepts Position as Governor's Education Policy Advisor

In July, Jan Lombardi resigned from OPI to accept a position as Governor Schweitzer's Education Policy Advisor. At OPI, Jan worked in the Superintendent's Office on Special Projects, including the Indian Education for All Summit, the Yellow School Bus Tours, speechwriting for the State Superintendent, the OPI Parents' Webpage, OPI's Talent Pool, and a number of other projects. We wish Jan all the best in her new position and look forward to an on-going positive working relationship with her and the Governor's Office.

Facts about Montana Education: 2005 Edition is Available On-line

The 2005 version of the Facts about Montana Education is now available on-line at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/measurement/edfacts2005.pdf>. Printed copies of this tri-fold brochure will be available for distribution by the end of September. OPI Contact: Andy Boehm, Research Specialist, (406)444-0375, aboehm@state.mt.us

Quality Schools Interim Committee

Consultants for the legislative Quality Schools Interim Committee delivered their preliminary reports to the committee on August 30-31. The reports are available on the committee web site at http://leg.state.mt.us/css/committees/interim/2005_2006/qual_schools/default.asp. Links to the specific reports are listed below:

- [American Indian Achievement](#) - (Silverthorn)

- [Montana K-12 Funding Needs Assessment and Cost Analysis](#) - (Farrier-Robson)
- [Determining the cost of providing an adequate education in the State of Montana](#) - (Wood-Smith)
- [Recruitment, Retention, and Teacher Salaries](#) (Stoddard-Young)

School Law Book is Available On-Line

In light of the anticipated upcoming special session on school funding, OPI has chosen to delay the printing the School Law Book until after the special session. The Legislative Services Division has provided OPI with a PDF file of the 2005 School Laws (based on the same statutes that were in the 2003 book). The 335-page School Law book and a reference page for amendments approved in 2005 can be found on the OPI Legal Division webpage at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/LegalDivision/index.html>. OPI Contact: Beverly J. Marlow, Paralegal, 406-444-3172, bemarlow@mt.gov.

Summary of Legislation Related to K-12 Education

The Office of Public Instruction and its education partners joined together to write the *2005 Legislative Session: Summary of Legislation Related to K-12 Education*. This 57-page booklet is available online at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/superintendent/05LegSummary.pdf>. If you would like hard copies for distribution at a meeting or conference, please contact Sue Tinsley, 444-5643 or stinsley@mt.gov.

Believing is Seeing: 2005 Montana Educator Forum

With the theme "Believing is Seeing," the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation's 2005 Montana Educator Forum will focus on what is right and worth celebrating in Montana education. The forum takes place September 30, 2005 at the Red Lion Colonial Inn, Helena. Montana educators, policy makers, parents, and others will gather from around the state to celebrate the small miracles that take place in Montana's classrooms every day. For a brochure and registration information, go to <http://www.mea-mft.org/05forum.htm>.

Constitution Day, Sept. 17: Congress' latest Appropriation Bill included a little noticed provision by Senator Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia "requiring" all schools and universities receiving federal funds to have programs for students to commemorate the signing of the U.S. Constitution on September 17th.

Montana schools already include study of the Constitution in their regular curriculums. Senator Byrd's purpose is to get Americans more aware of their Constitutional rights and responsibilities. You have broad discretion on how you honor this Congressional request. Superintendent McCulloch is confident schools will do their usual excellent job. Of course, Montana's Constitution is also still in effect, and the responsibility for curriculum development remains with our local school districts, Article X, Section 8.

2005 AYP Status Reports: The annual release to the public and news media of the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Status Reports for all Montana public schools and districts occurred on August 17th. A total of 785 (93%) of Montana's 848 schools and 402 (92%) of Montana's 436 school districts met the federal AYP requirements.

The U.S. Department of Education has not given final approval to changes Montana has adopted to determine the 2005 AYP Status Report. In the event the Department does not

accept the new “All Schools Accountability Process,” OPI may be forced to recalculate the 2005 AYP Reports at a later date.

The “Adequate Yearly Progress” status of each Montana school and district is summarized on the Office of Public Instruction’s web site at: www.opi.mt.gov/AYP
2005 Student Criterion Reference Test Scores can be found on the OPI web site at: www.opi.mt.gov/criterion. OPI Contact: Joe Lamson, 444-3161, or jlamson@mt.gov.

2005 Guide for AYP Process

If you would like information on the process used by OPI to determine Adequate Yearly Progress for schools and districts in 2005, you may want to consult the *All Schools Accountability Process Guide* (ASAP Guide, which is posted at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/Supt/NewsStories/05D1DF5D50.html>). This information was previously included in the mailing of your Final AYP Reports.

Board of Public Education Meeting

The Board of Public Education will hold its next regular meeting September 15-16, 2005, at Flathead High School, Kalispell, Montana. Tentative agenda information items from the Office of Public Instruction include: the Superintendent’s Report, a No Child Left Behind Update, MACIE and NCLB Reports and, Accreditation reports. Agenda action items include Accreditation issues. Contacts are Board of Public Education Executive Secretary Steve Meloy (406) 444-0300 or Deputy Superintendent Bud Williams (406) 444-7325.

Annual Data Collection

Each year in October, school districts in Montana submit information to the Office of Public Instruction through the Annual Data Collection (ADC). Through the ADC reporting process, OPI collects essential information from school districts on school personnel and teaching assignments, district calendars, disaggregated enrollment and attendance, non-public school enrollment, dropout data, numbers of gifted students, and numbers of Limited English Proficient students. Packets with the ADC information were mailed to district offices on September 2. The completed reports are due to your county superintendent by October 18 and due to OPI by October 25. OPI Contact: Karen Richem, Accreditation Officer, 444-2410 or krichem@mt.gov.

Training for the Annual Data Collection

- OPI has scheduled hands-on training for school personnel and county superintendents at four locations in September. The trainings will be held as follows:
September 9 Helena, OPI Training Room, 1227 11th Avenue, 8:30 am - noon
September 12 Shelby High School, 1001 Valley Street, High School Lab, 10 am – 1 pm
September 13 Dawson High School, 900 N. Merrill Ave, Room D-111, 8:30 am - noon
September 14 Billings Senior HS, 425 Grand Avenue, Room 302, 8:30 am - noon

To register for the training, go to <http://www.opi.mt.gov/RegForms/ADCTraining/>. Please bring your ADC packets with you to the training.

For users who are familiar with the Annual Data Collection data and formats, OPI will offer video-on-demand training. You will be able to watch this training from your computer at your convenience. The video training will be at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/adc/Index.html>. If you do not already have QuickTime software on your computer, you will need to download QuickTime to view the video training. Instructions will be provided on the OPI website for accessing the video training.

Montana Meth Project

The Montana Meth Project (MMP), a 501© 3 nonprofit founded by the Thomas and Stacey Siebel Foundation in alliance with the Partnership for a Drug Free America, is launching a series of hard-hitting television, print and billboard ads geared to 12 to 17 year olds about the dangers of methamphetamine use. In conjunction with Attorney General Mike McGrath's County Toolkit and the soon-to-be-released Tools for Schools from OPI, the MMP campaign will help schools focus public attention on a serious health problem in Montana.

News conferences across the state were held on August 31 to announce the initiative to the public. This effort will also feature two Web sites--one project-focused, www.montanameth.org, and the other teen-focused, www.notevenonce.com. Ads began running on September 1.

MMP will follow up with annual tracking surveys developed by The Partnership for a Drug Free America to assess attitudes and behaviors related to meth use in Montana. The project has been fully funded for the first two years with the hope of sustainable funding to follow.

Meth is.....

"Meth" is easily made locally in a kitchen sink using readily available ingredients. White, odorless and bitter tasting, it is smoked, snorted, injected or disguised by dissolving it in a consumable liquid. In many cases addiction is almost immediate.

Long term affects include functional and molecular brain damage, compulsive drug-seeking and use, violent behavior, rotting teeth, intense anxiety, confusion and insomnia. Psychotic symptoms often accompany the addiction: paranoia, auditory hallucinations, mood swings and delusions. Homicidal and suicidal thoughts are not uncommon.

Children living in homes where meth is produced or distributed are often neglected and their possessions are contaminated with toxic waste. They are mistrustful of adults and do not respond well to stress. Nationally, about one-third of the children removed from such homes tested positive for the drug.

Missing Children Information

State Statute (44-2-506 MCA) requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to assist the Missing Children Information program by distributing the list of missing school children on a monthly basis. The missing children report is available on the web at <http://www.doj.state.mt.us/enforcement/missingchildren/missingchildrenschoolage.pdf>. If you have questions about the contents of the report, please contact the Montana Missing Person Clearinghouse at 406-444-1526.

Education Licensure

Educator License Renewal Procedural Change

Effective September 1, 2005, educators who are renewing their licenses will be required to send documentation of college credit and renewal units earned before the license can be issued. Educators can still renew their licenses online, but they will no longer be able to print their license when they complete the process. The Educator Licensure system will be notified that the educator has renewed, and the license will be set to "pending" until the documentation is received. Educators renewing using the paper application may either send the documentation with the application or ask their university to send the transcripts directly to OPI, Attn: Educator Licensure. In either case, the license will not be considered "renewed" until the documentation of renewal activities is received. Contact Educator Licensure at 406-444-3150 or cert@mt.gov.

New Licensure Specialist

We are pleased to announce that Nicole Weissman has accepted the position of Educator Licensure Specialist. The position was vacated by Patty Schupp, who left OPI to accept a position as a special education teacher with Great Divide Educational Services. Nicole has been serving as the Licensure Program Assistant, giving her a solid background in the many challenges facing licensure. Please join us in welcoming Nicole.

Professional Development for Renewal Units: Information and forms for Renewal Unit pre-approval can be found on the OPI Educator Licensure webpage at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/Cert/Index.html>. If an educator wishes to receive renewal units for a professional development activity provided by an organization other than an approved provider, the activity must be submitted to OPI and approved before attending the activity. Educator Licensure can be reached at 406-444-3150 or cert@mt.gov.

Teacher Loan Forgiveness -- The Taxpayer-Teacher Protection Act (P.L. 108-409)

Teachers who teach math, science, or special education & who have taught for five years in a Title I school may be eligible for new loan forgiveness limits. The Taxpayer-Teacher Protection Act (P.L. 108-409) authorizes up to \$17,500 in loan forgiveness to eligible highly qualified math, science & special education teachers. This increase of \$12,500 above the previous loan limits is meant to ease the shortage of teachers in key subject areas. For more information, go to: <http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/updates/2005/0124.html>
<http://www.ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/GEN0414.html>.

Assessment

The August edition of OPI's online assessment newsletter, ***JUMP Join Us in Measuring Progress*** is online at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Assessment/NewsLetters/Aug05AssessNews.pdf>

Check out the new and improved Assessment webpage at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/Assessment/index.html>

Test Development Activities for 2006 CRT

In October, Montana educators are needed to participate in test development activities for the spring 2006 administration of the CRT and the CRT-Alternate. Since 2006 will be the first administration of the CRT and CRT-Alternate in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7, this is an especially good opportunity to work with the test items for those grades. Below is the notice and information from the JUMP newsletter. The deadline for online application is **September 10**. We know this is a busy time in schools but hope you will find time to inform and encourage teachers to participate. If you have questions, please contact Judy Snow at OPI, 406-444-3656 jsnow@mt.gov or Sharon Houle at Measured Progress, +1 (800) 431-8901 x2186 shoule@measuredprogress.org

➤ **CRT**

CRT test development activities are for the Spring 2006 CRT administration in grades 3-8 and 10 in Reading and Math. They include item and bias review and benchmarking of constructed response items. The schedule follows.

- CRT Item Review
 - October 11, 2005: Grades 3, 4, 7, and 8, Reading and Math--Helena
 - October 12, 2005: Grades 5, 6, and 10, Reading and Math--Helena
- CRT Bias Review

- October 12, 2005: Grades 3-8 and 10, Reading and Math--Helena
- CRT Benchmarking Constructed Response Items (selecting exemplars)
 - October 12, 2005: Grades 3-8 and 10, Reading and Math--Helena

Educators from across the state including curriculum directors and teachers who work directly with the grades and subjects being reviewed are invited to participate. Educators may apply for more than one of the CRT activities. Travel, lodging, meal, and substitute expenses (up to \$75) will be reimbursed. To apply, please visit the Measured Progress website. Submission directions and a form are online at <http://iregister.measuredprogress.org>. Please apply by September 10, 2005. Measured Progress will notify you by October 1, 2005 with detailed information.

➤ **CRT-Alternate**

CRT-Alternate test development activities are for the Spring 2006 administration in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 in Reading and Math. They include beta test training and participation in the beta test of the items. The training and beta testing require special education teachers with students in grades 3, 5, 6 and 7 who qualify for the CRT-Alternate. The participation guidelines are on pages 9 and 10 of the *CRT-Alternate Administration Manual*, which is posted at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/Assessment/05CRTAltAdminMan.pdf>. The schedule is:

- October 10, 2005: Training, Missoula
- October 11-28, 2005: Beta Testing, in teacher's school/classroom
- October 28, 2005: Fax feedback form to Measured Progress and mail back assessment materials.
- November: Conference call to provide feedback on the assessment

OPI Contact: Judy Snow, Assessment Director, 444-3656 or jsnow@mt.gov.

Information Technology

Please note that the e-mail extension for all OPI employees is now **@mt.gov** instead of **@state.mt.us**. For the remainder of 2005, both extensions are active, but after December 31, 2005, only the mt.gov extension will be operational. Also note that the OPI webpage address is now www.opi.mt.gov.

Official E-mail for School Year 2005-06

This is the fifth year the "official" e-mail accounts, located on servers at OPI, have been used to communicate to each Montana school district. Your district's official e-mail account will be used for all notifications from the OPI. These official notifications will NOT be sent through regular postal mail.

A letter is being sent to all responsible officials that contain specific login information for each district along with instructions on a wide variety of methods to view Official e-mail. We are also including helpful technical specifications and tools to make connecting to OPI's data systems more trouble free. We recommend that the technical specifications be forwarded to your technical support staff, if available. If you have any questions, please contact our Internet Services Help Desk at (406) 444-1626.

Video Conference Pilot Project Summary

OPI's video conference pilot project began in October 2004 and ran through June 1, 2005. During the pilot period the Department of Administration gave OPI free bridging between the MetNet, VisionNet and EMET networks and VisionNet gave free bridging services to the

VisionNet K-12 video conferencing sites. In exchange for these free services, OPI agreed to deliver programs to extend administrative services and deliver curriculum utilizing videoconferencing over the MetNet and VisionNet networks.

A total of 26 video conferences were held during the seven month pilot project. These conferences included small group meetings as well as training sessions, assessment and accreditation briefings, and a variety of other conferences. The conferences connected from 2-20 sites simultaneously. A total of 30 K-12 sites signed on to participate in the pilot project and the feedback we received from these sites has been very positive.

Due to the positive feedback OPI received, we will continue to use video conferencing as a means to deliver training, administrative and curriculum services, and to conduct meetings on an as needed basis. A tentative calendar of proposed events for the upcoming school year can be viewed at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Supt/VideoConferenceCal.pdf>. This calendar will be updated periodically and as dates are firmed up, you can check the monthly or daily calendar of events by going to <http://www.opi.mt.gov/Calendar/calendar.php?calendar=4>. If you have any questions about video conferencing, please call the Internet Services Help Desk at 444-1626.

OPI Web Calendar

OPI's web calendar is intended to be a single point of contact for all deadlines, trainings, workshops and other events that originate from or are sponsored by the OPI. In addition, the calendar includes other events of interest to the education community. The calendar is searchable by date, name of event, contact person, location and key words. Each division has its own calendar and the OPI Main Calendar is a compilation of all the individual calendars. The events on each division calendar are posted in a different color, so it is easy to scan the Main calendar and find specific types of events.

You can view the calendar by clicking on the tab labeled Calendar near the top of the OPI web page, www.opi.mt.gov. The calendar always opens to the OPI Main Calendar; you can view a specific calendar by choosing it from the dropdown list in the upper right-hand corner. When you see an event on any calendar that interests you, click on it and a detail box will display more information.

School Budgeting and Accounting

October 3 Enrollment Count

The Fall Enrollment count date is Monday, October 3, 2005. Students enrolled in the district on that date must be reported to OPI. Information about ANB and Instructions for entering the report on the MAEFAIRS electronic system will be posted on the School Finance Division website by mid-September. OPI Contacts: Nica Carte at (406) 444-4401 or ncarte@mt.gov or Denise Ulberg at (406) 444-1960 or dulberg@mt.gov.

“10 Day Rule”

A district may not count a student enrolled if that student has been absent, with or without excuse, for 11 consecutive school days immediately preceding and including the official count dates (October 3, 2005 and February 1, 2006). Even if the student has not missed 10 days as of the count date, a district cannot count the student if: 1) the student has enrolled in another district; OR 2) the district has received notice verbally or in writing that the student will no longer be attending; OR 3) the student had records transferred to another school; OR 4) the student is otherwise unable to continue attendance (death, detention, etc.) (ARM 10.20.102). OPI Contact: Denise Ulberg (406) 444-1960, or dulberg@mt.gov.

Job Corps and ANB

Under a law passed in 2001, MCA20-9-707 allows ANB for the resident district of a student who attends a Montana job corps program at Anaconda, Ronan, or Darby. To claim ANB, students must be enrolled in the resident district and the district must have an interlocal agreement with the job corps. OPI Contact: Denise Ulberg, (406) 444-1960, or dulberg@mt.gov.

FY2005-06 Final Budgets due September 12

The FY2004-05 Trustees' Financial Summary (TFS) and FY2005-06 Final Budgets are due to OPI by September 12 (2nd Monday in September). OPI Contact: Nica Carte, (406) 444-4401 or ncarte@mt.gov.

Contract soon for FY2004-05 Audits

If you haven't already done so, please contact your auditor soon to arrange an audit of FY2004-05. School districts that spent more than \$500,000 of Federal assistance last year, including USDA commodities, must submit an "A-133" (aka "Federal") audit report for FY2004-05 to OPI by March 31, 2005.

Districts that spent less than \$500,000 of Federal assistance must have a "regular" audit and submit a report to OPI within one year of the close of the fiscal year (i.e., FY2004-05 audits are due to OPI by June 30, 2006). Very small districts with less than \$200,000 of total revenues in all funds combined must have an audit "review" every four years upon OPI request. OPI Contact: Mike Waterman, (406) 444-4524, or mwaterman@mt.gov.

Approved Bus Routes

Please remind bus drivers – Buses must be driven on routes as approved by the county transportation committee. Routes must not be altered without the county transportation committee's approval. Running alternative routes without approval may result in state and county overpayments that are subject to refund. Altering routes might also expose the district to unnecessary liability risks. OPI Contact: Maxine Mougeot, (406) 444-3096, or mmougeot@mt.gov.

FY2004-05 Bus Route Forms

TR-1 Bus Route Forms are due to the County Superintendent by October 1 and to OPI by October 15.

- 1) Forms were pre-filled with last year's bus information and posted at <http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/0000D9D9-80000007/00017A9B-80000007/>
- 2) Blank forms are posted at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/PupilTransport/Index.html>.
- 3) An option OPI form (TR-2) is available to help track students on each route at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/pupiltransport/TR-2.pdf>. OPI Contact: Maxine Mougeot, (406) 444-3096 or mmougeot@mt.gov.

Bus Driver Training Requirement – 10 Hours per Year

Standards adopted by the Board of Public Education in 2002 require a minimum of 10 hours of training for school bus drivers each year. This includes substitute drivers. Each district must design and implement a training program using the guidelines and requirements found in the 2003 Yellow School Bus Standards. See <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/pupiltransport/busstds.pdf>. OPI has a variety of videos on bus driving techniques and bus safety issues that are available for district use. The video listing and various bus driver training opportunities across the state are listed at: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/PupilTransport/index.html#train>. OPI Contact: Maxine Mougeot, (406) 444-3096 or mmougeot@mt.gov.

“S” Endorsement Update

Federal motor carrier safety regulations require school bus drivers to take a driving test (skills test) and a written test in order to receive an “S” endorsement on their commercial driver’s license. The original deadline for these tests was September 30, 2005. Drivers with at least two years of school bus driving experience immediately prior to the deadline could waive the skills test requirement. The Motor Vehicle Division of the Department of Justice is responsible for administering both tests. The MVD, with help from OPI’s Pupil Transportation Director, Maxine Mougeot, has spent the past six months helping bus drivers meet the September 30, 2005 deadline by offering special testing sites around the state. To date, this effort has been very effective and over half of Montana’s 3,600 bus drivers have taken the written portion of the test.

In a press release issued August 25, 2005, Attorney General Mike McGrath announced recent changes to federal regulations which mandate the “S” endorsement. The deadline has been extended to **September 30, 2006** – one year from now! Drivers who do not yet qualify for the skills test waiver, but will complete two years of school bus driving experience prior to the new deadline will benefit from the extension. All drivers are encouraged to take the written test as soon as possible to avoid a rush next year when the new deadline takes effect. Contact: Motor Vehicle Division (406) 444-3292.

Farewell and Best Wishes Tal Redpath

Tal Redpath, Financial Specialist for Enrollment/ANB, Impact Aid, Taxable Valuation and Status of Schools, resigned his position with OPI. His last day in the office was August 31, 2005. Tal has been a tremendous resource for school districts; he will be missed, and we wish him well in his future endeavors.

The remaining School Finance Division staff will cover Tal’s duties until a replacement is hired. Please contact the following individuals for question related to:

Impact Aid – Mike Waterman (406) 444-4524 or mwaterman@mt.gov
Enrollment/ANB – Nica Carte (406) 444-4401 or ncarte@mt.gov
Consolidation/Annexation – Bonnie Maze (406) 444-3249 or bmaze@mt.gov
Taxable Valuation – Denise Ulberg (406) 444-1960 or dulberg@mt.gov
All Other Questions – Denise Ulberg (406) 444-1960 or dulberg@mt.gov

Fiscal Services

Montana Federal and State Grants Handbook – Revised June 2005

Financial assistance to school districts and other recipients through federal and state grants administered by the Office of Public Instruction helps provide enhanced educational opportunities for our children, professional development for teachers and administrators, services for special needs children and a safe environment for both students and staff. In the 2004-2005 school year, OPI distributed grant funds totaling \$130 million to Montana recipients.

As a sub-grantor of funds, OPI is responsible for ensuring that recipients administer the funds in accordance with general and specific program statutes and regulations. This Handbook explains many of these important requirements in an effort to assure sub-grantee compliance, and, thereby, ensure continuing state and federal support for your school district or organization for the children of Montana. The OPI strives to make the process of applying for, accounting for and reporting on grants as uniform and simple as possible, while complying with the requirements of the various laws and regulations.

The updated version of the Handbook is available on the OPI web page at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/FederalPrograms>. We hope this State and Federal Grants Handbook is a useful reference for the implementation of grants administered by OPI. OPI Contact: Julia Dilly, Administrator, Fiscal Services Division, 444-4523, jdilly@mt.gov.

Department of Education Services

U.S. Senate Youth Scholarship Program

High school juniors and seniors who meet the eligibility criteria listed below are encouraged to participate in the United States Senate Youth Scholarship Program for 2005-06. Two Montana students and a first and second alternate will be selected to participate in the Annual Senate Youth Scholarship Program. The top two Montana students will receive a \$5,000 college scholarship and a one-week, all expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., March 4-11, 2006.

Applicants must:

- be a junior or graduating senior in a Montana high school;
- be elected to a student government office or have been a Boys/Girls State Delegate for the 2005-06 school year;
- be actively involved in the school and community;
- be a permanent resident of the United States; and
- be a Montana resident.

Interested students should see their high school counselors to sign up for the qualifying exam given in October. Potential awardees compete for this scholarship by taking a 50-point exam on current politics, American History, and the U.S. Constitution. The top ten scorers are then required to record videotaped responses to a set of questions provided by the Office of Public Instruction, U.S. Senate Youth Program staff. Two delegates and two alternates are chosen from the ten semifinalists. The result of this competition will be forwarded and the William Randolph Hearst Foundation will announce winners in December.

For more information contact Carol Gneckow, Office of Public Instruction, (406) 444-2417 or e-mail, cgneckow@mt.gov or visit the Web page <http://www.mt.gov/scholarships/index.html>.

Accreditation Division

Technology Planning and E-Rate Seminar

September 27, 2005 Billings Sheraton Hotel - 27 N 27th St, Billings

September 30, 2005 Best Inn - 3303 Brooks Street, Missoula

The Office of Public Instruction, in partnership with the Northwest Educational Technology Consortium (NETC), the Montana Small Schools Alliance and Jack Sterling, E-Rate Specialist, invites you to attend a Technology Planning and E-Rate Seminar. The seminars are designed to assist Montana school district to:

- Maximize the effectiveness of the local technology plans,
- Meet the Title II, Part D and E-Rate technology plan requirements,
- Obtain the best discount from the E-Rate program, and
- Minimizing the problems with E-Rate applications and follow-up paperwork.

Technology directors/coordinators, technology team members, and E-Rate coordinators are encouraged to attend. Further details and registration information will be sent to the district via Official E-mail by Friday, September 2, 2005 OPI Contacts: Michael Hall (406) 444-4422 or Lorraine Burns (406) 444-1852

Learn and Serve Montana

Learn and Serve Montana looks forward to another exciting year of school-based service-learning projects. This year, as in the past, five Montana schools (Hardin, Lewistown, Lockwood, Plentywood, and Sentinel High School Missoula) will lead regional demonstration service-learning projects. These projects most often incorporate the history curriculum into service projects that benefit the community. In addition to these, the six Montana schools (Hardin, Lewistown, Libby, Lockwood, Plentywood, Sentinel Missoula) who participated in 2005 Learn and Serve "Citizen Preparedness Through Youth Leadership" (CPTYL) projects will continue their activities that link the academic curriculum to service projects aimed at making schools and communities safer. Each of these schools will also conduct outreach projects to their neighboring schools and communities utilizing youth leadership as a means of spreading service-learning to all Montana schools. More information about these programs and service-learning generally, can be found on the new Learn and Serve Montana Web site (<http://www.opi.mt.gov/LearnServe/index.html>).

The Montana Youth Leadership Conference (MYLC), an annual service-learning and youth leadership conference is scheduled for September 18-21, 2005, at the Yogo Inn in Lewistown. Youth and teachers from across the state are invited to attend this year's conference that focuses upon service-learning, team building and conflict resolution. Dr. Kate Cumbo, director of Peace Jam, will facilitate the conference activities. For more information please contact Josset Gauley at OPI (406-444-3538) (jgauley@mt.gov) or Cindy Gopp at Lockwood Elementary (goppc@lockwood.k12.mt.us) (406-252-6022).

Character Ed Grant Opportunity for Elementary Schools

Montana has been awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education under the Partnerships in Character Education - State Grants Program. The award for the 2005-2006 funding cycle is \$735,165. It is anticipated that the funding will continue for a total of four years.

Receipt of this funding provides an opportunity for approximately ten elementary schools to participate in the Honor, Respect & Responsibility character education grant proposal. These schools will test a bi-culturally based character education model developed under a previous grant proposal, the Montana Character Education Project. Schools will be selected to participate in the project through a competitive application process and have until September 15, 2005, to submit their application to the Office of Public Instruction.

Technical assistance to help applicants prepare their proposals will be offered in Billings and at Fort Belknap College the first week in August. Registration for the workshops is enclosed in the application packet on the OPI Character Education Web page.

Schools interested in submitting an application should go to the OPI Character Education Web page at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/characterEd/Goals.html> to access the grant application guidelines. Priority points will be awarded for elementary schools with high populations of American Indian students.

For additional information, contact Peggy Azure at the Office of Public Instruction at (406) 444-0466 or pazure@mt.gov.

Career, Technical and Adult Education Division

Staff Changes

- Family and Consumer Sciences Specialist Dianne O'Neill retired in mid August. In addition to her FCS Specialist duties, Dianne was the FCCLA state advisor and the SE Mass Representative.
- Bev Tompers resigned as FFA Executive Secretary to take a Family and Consumer Sciences teaching position with the Belgrade Public Schools.
- Bill Jimmerson will join the CTAE staff as FFA Program Manager starting Sept. 6, 2005. Bill has devoted many years to agricultural education and the FFA organization at both secondary and post-secondary levels. He has most recently been employed by Stockman's Bank in Conrad.

Career Clusters Conference

The Montana Tech Prep Consortia are sponsoring a Career Clusters conference October 5-7 at Carroll College in Helena. The conference is designed to "explore seamless education in Montana through the vehicle of Career Clusters and to chart the future direction of clusters use in Montana." Career Clusters is the integration of core academics, career and technical, health and safety, and arts curriculums to identify pathways from secondary school to two- and four-year colleges, graduate school, and the workplace, so students can learn in school and what they can do in the future. For more information on the October conference go to www.montana.edu/wochewd or contact Angie Collins (406) 444-0714, angelac@mt.gov or Diana Fiedler (406) 444-7991, dfiedler@mt.gov at the OPI. For more information on Career Clusters visit www.careerclusters.org.

ASVAB – Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery

For high school juniors and seniors, making decisions about their future after high school can often be complicated and challenging. Teachers and counselors will need to help provide them with resources to inform them about the opportunities that await them and ways they can make the best possible decisions. Ultimately, each high school student will need to embark on that journey from high school into the world of work and career.

The **ASVAB Career Exploration Program** can help student make these big decisions. The ASVAB, used by hundreds of thousands of high school students in over 14,000 schools nationwide is one of the most widely used and highly regarded career development programs in the world. This program is provided free of charge to schools and students. The ASVAB consists of eight tests and takes about 3 hours to complete. Career Counselors can use the scores to help students explore potential careers in both the military and civilian worlds of work.

With fiscal constraints school districts face in Montana, the ASVAB Career Exploration Program is a great value. It provides test materials, test administration, scoring services, reference materials, and post test interpretation and career exploration services at no cost to schools or students. While the DOD sponsors the ASVAB, there is no military obligation connected with utilizing the ASVAB Career Exploration Program.

If you are interested in this free assessment tool, contact Doug Johnson, Education Services Specialist, Butte MEPS, 22 West Park Street, Butte, MT 59701, Phone: (800) 323-0513, (406) 723-9276 ext 213 or via email butess@mepcom.army.mil.

Special Education Division

Updated information regarding the "**Comprehensive School and Community Treatment, School-Based Medicaid Services**, Information Sharing and Training Sessions" is available using the following link: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/SpecEd/CSCTTrainingFlyer.pdf>. OPI Contact: Bob Runkel, brunkel@mt.gov, 406-444-4429

IDEA 2004 Revised Forms

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was reauthorized in December 2004 with an effective date of July 1, 2005. The Office of Public Instruction Special Education Division has reviewed the new law and, where necessary, made changes to existing forms or developed new forms to reflect changes or additions in the new law. All new and revised forms as well as Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheets are posted on the OPI website at: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/SpecEd/index.html>

IDEA Reauthorization Workshops

The Division of Special Education will be conducting workshops around the state with information on the changes resulting from the 2004 Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. These workshops are intended for special education teachers, related service providers and special education directors. Division of Special Education staff will discuss changes and present revised and new forms. All presentations will be on-site—there will be no METNET/Vision Net sessions. During the week of September 19–23, workshops will be conducted in Havre, Glasgow, Sidney, Miles City, and Billings. During the week of October 3–7, workshops will be conducted in Missoula, Kalispell, Great Falls, Butte, and Bozeman. Specific location and workshop times are available on the OPI Web site under the Calendar of Education Events in Montana. Registration for the workshops is online at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/regforms/idea/>. OPI contact person: Doug Doty, ddoty@mt.gov or (406) 444-0907.

Hearing Conservation Program: Evaluations for Auditory Processing Disorders

The Hearing Conservation Program (HCP) is provided by the Office of Public Instruction through contracts with educational audiologists or their employers. The purpose of the program is to identify children with educationally significant hearing losses and to provide follow-up support to children, families and schools.

In June 2005, a meeting was held with the Hearing Conservation Program audiologists to discuss professional issues and the direction of the program. One of the agenda items was the provision of evaluations for auditory processing disorders (APD). The educational audiologists that have been able to do APD evaluations report that they are receiving more and more referrals and that they have been doing APD evaluations over and above the requirements of their HCP contracts. The consensus of the group was to suspend the provision of testing for auditory processing disorders. This decision is supported by the Office of Public Instruction.

Because there continues to be professional debate regarding the efficacy of APD testing, recommendations for remediation, and the fact that this service is not specifically included in the hearing conservation program contracts, the educational audiologists will no longer provide auditory processing evaluations as part of the Hearing Conservation Program.

In those cases in which a student's Child Study Team or Individualized Education Program Team makes a determination that a student should be tested for an auditory processing

disorder, the district would be obligated to pay for the cost of the testing. It is permissible for the district to use its IDEA Part B or Preschool funds, as appropriate, to pay for the costs. OPI Contact: Marilyn Pearson, Assistant Director of Special Education, at (406)444-4428.

Educational Opportunity and Equity Division

Approved Providers of Supplemental Educational Services

OPI has posted our newest list of approved Supplemental Educational Service (SES) providers on the Title I Part A webpage at: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/TitleI/ApprovedProvider.pdf>. There are additional providers that were not on last year's list. While some are online providers, some will deliver services in-person at the school, at a community center, or in the student's home. In addition to the list, OPI has posted one-page descriptions of each provider.

OPI will be mailing an SES toolkit and a guidance document to all districts with Title I schools identified for improvement. The toolkit contains helpful forms, sample letters, and sample contracts. This was distributed to districts with Title I schools in improvement at last year's High Priority Schools Institute, so many of you already have this resource.

We wish you well as you start the new school year. If you need assistance in offering public school choice (if available) or SES in Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, please contact us through Gwen Smith, Title I Administrative Assistant, at 406-444-5660 or gsmith@mt.gov.

Indian Education

Dr. Martha Many Grey Horses has accepted the position of Indian Education Grants Manager. This position will administer the \$1.1 million "Ready to Go" grant program for Indian Education for All, which was funded by the 2005 legislature. Martha holds a Doctorate in Educational Thought and Socio-cultural Studies, a Masters in Education and a Masters and a Bachelors degree in Social Work. Martha's starting date is September 19th.

Gifted and Talented Education Workshops Scheduled for November 3-9

The Office of Public Instruction's Gifted and Talented Program Development project announces gifted and talented education workshops November 3 through 9 in three locations: Billings, Great Falls and Kalispell. At each site, participants have two options to choose from: Gifted and Talented Program Planning, and Curriculum Differentiation. This workshop is cosponsored by the Office of Public Instruction, School Administrators of Montana (SAM), and the Montana Association for Gifted and Talented Education (AGATE). For an announcement and registration form, go to <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/gifted/NovemberWorkshops05.pdf>.

Contact: Julie Sykes, School Administrators of Montana, samjs@sammt.org, 406-444-2510.

Advanced Placement

Online AP Events and Training offered by the College Board 2005-2006

The College Board will host a series of online Advanced Placement workshops and other events. Some of these events are free; others have a registration fee. You can also get a detailed schedule for 2005-2006 by clicking on this link to the Office of Public Instruction's AP Web page: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/advplacement/ScheduleColBrdOnline.pdf>. Districts eligible for AP grants can apply for funding for these events. Click on the College Board Web site: <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/article/0,3045,149-0-0-29580,00.html>.

AP Subgrant Applications

As we approach the final year of the Advanced Placement (AP) Incentive federal grant, there are some reminders that may be useful. The 2005-2006 AP subgrant application is on the AP Web page at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/AdvPlacement/index.html>. Please use this form for all online AP and pre-AP courses, and for teacher training. The deadline for the subgrant application is September 1, **2006** so you have flexibility in when you submit the application.

The OPI also has a separate federal grant that allows us to cover the entire fee for Advanced Placement exams for low-income individuals. Make sure to select this option when ordering the AP exams for these students. Please use the federal definition of low-income individuals below:

A low-income student is defined as one eligible for free or reduced-price lunch; or eligible under Section 1124 of ESEA; or eligible to receive medical assistance under the Medicaid program of Title XIX of the Social Security Act; or from a low-income family receiving assistance under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act.

OPI Contact: Kathleen Molloy, 444-4317, kathym@mt.gov.

Federal Monitoring Visit for Title III, Bilingual Education

A team of four Federal monitors will be visiting Montana on September 19-23, 2005 to review the Title III (Bilingual Education) program under No Child Left Behind. Montana receives \$500,000 in Title III funds from NCLB, of which \$380,000 is allocated to districts and \$100,000 is used for administration. The monitoring will include a review of OPI's fiscal processes for the Title III program and an evaluation of Montana's compliance with NCLB requirements for English language proficiency assessment and standards. In addition to visiting OPI offices, the team has made tentative plans to visit five Montana school districts.

OPI Contact: Lynn Hinch, 444-3482, lhinch@mt.gov.

Deadline Extended for Paraprofessionals to Meet NCLB Requirements

Many of you and many of your paraprofessionals have been worried about the deadline for all instructional paraprofessionals paid with Title I Part A funds (and all instructional paraprofessionals in Title I schoolwide programs) to meet requirements under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) by January 8, 2006.

The U.S. Department of Education on June 17, 2005 confirmed it will extend the deadline for paraprofessionals to meet the NCLB mandates for paraprofessionals to the end of the 2005-06 school year, which is in line with other deadlines in the law. This means a paraprofessional who has not met the requirements will be able to continue to be employed until the end of the 2005-2006 school year. OPI Contact: BJ Granbery at 406-444-4420 or bgranbery@mt.gov.

- ❖ Kudos to the American Federation of Teachers for its efforts in winning this important concession for paraprofessionals who are still trying to meet job qualification requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Great news from GEAR UP!

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded Montana another six-year \$18 million grant for the GEAR UP program. Salish Kootenai College also received another six-year GEAR UP partnership grant. Contact: Sandy Merdinger, Director, Montana GEAR UP, 406-444-0317, smerdinger@ocche.montana.edu

Health Enhancement and Safety Division

Coordinated School Health

Amended School Immunization Rules

A brief summary of the amendments of the School Immunization Rules which became effective on July 1, 2005 follows below.

- Prior to kindergarten entry, a child must have two MMRs separated by at least 28 days.
(Became effective on July 1, 2005)
- Laboratory testing as proof of immunity for post-secondary students is acceptable for measles as well as rubella. Laboratory testing must be from a CLIA approved laboratory.
(Became effective on July 1, 2005)
- A large section of the previous administrative rule was removed because it applied only to daycare children, not for the children in a pre-school setting.
- **Prior to school entry in 2006**, children, at least 11 years of age, entering grade 7 must have a booster of tetanus and diphtheria containing vaccine, if no tetanus or diphtheria vaccine has been given for 5 years.

If you have additional comments or wish to discuss the school rules, feel free to contact the DPHHS Immunization office at 406-444-5580 or Joyce Burgett at 406-444-0065, jburgett@mt.gov.

Back- to- School Covering Kids and Families Initiative

For the third year, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies – The Montana Coalition (HMHB) in partnership with *Covering Kids and Families* is launching its annual Back-to-School enrollment drive. As you'll remember, this initiative encourages parents of uninsured children to make application to CHIP or other low cost or free health care programs a top priority on their back-to-school checklists.

Kids who have health care coverage are better prepared to learn in school. This needs to be a top priority for parents as they prepare to send their kids back to school. The coverage offered through CHIP and other low-cost or free health care coverage programs means access to health care for kids and peace of mind for parents.

Here in Montana it is estimated that over 20,000 Montana children are without health insurance and, as is the case across the country, most of these children are in families with working moms and dads. Coverage is offered through CHIP, Medicaid, The Caring Program for Children, The Montana Comprehensive Health Association (MCHA), Montana Youth Care, Montana Mental Health Services Plan and Children's Special Health Services. Many families are not aware that their children may qualify for coverage. In Montana, a family of four can earn up to \$29,025 a year or more and qualify for CHIP. Eligibility is based on family size and income.

Please join The School Administrators of Montana and HMHB to help educate parents about low cost and free health coverage programs. By calling our toll-free number **(1-800-421-6667)** you can get more information about the Back-to-School project and order free materials (bookmarks and cards) to distribute to new and returning students. These materials will provide information to parents on how to enroll their children in a low-cost or free health care program.

These efforts are part of a nationwide Back-to-School enrollment drive launched by Covering Kids and Families (CKF), a national initiative to connect uninsured children with low-cost and free health care coverage programs in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. CKF is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the largest philanthropy in the country dedicated exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans.

As you prepare for the new school year, please make our Back-to-School enrollment drive a

part of your activities. Whether you will be involved with orientation programs, an open house or school registration, please help us provide information to parents so they can take the steps necessary to get their children enrolled in a health care program. The coverage offered through CHIP and the other low-cost or free health coverage programs helps keep Montana's kids healthy.

Please contact Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies at **1-800-421-6667** or email Executive Director Mike Cooney at mcooney@hmhb-mt.org to order free materials or if you have any questions. If you would like to learn more about Covering Kids and Families please visit www.coveringkids.org directly.

New Resource from VERB™ Promotes Fun, Active Games

Are you looking for new ways to keep groups of children in your programs and classes moving throughout the year? Active games are a great way for all kids to join in the fun, regardless of their skill level or athleticism. Four new games encourage tweens (ages 9 to 13) to "make it up" using ideas and prizes from VERB's Make It Up kit. The free kit provides prizes for up to 100 tweens. Use priority code "MK05MK" when ordering now at <http://www.cdc.gov/youthcampaign/index.htm> (click on link in box). VERB is a national campaign of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to increase physical activity among tweens.

Information Requested for Homeland Security

The US Department of Homeland Security has contracted with Techni Graphics Systems to collect information on local water supply systems, chemical facilities, schools, commercial facilities, agricultural facilities, financial institutions, fire, police and sheriff stations, hospitals, and other facilities. Steve Knecht, Critical Infrastructure Program Manager with Montana Disaster and Emergency Services, will assist with obtaining this information. If contacted by personnel representing Techni Graphic Systems, please advise them to contact Steve Knecht at (406) 841-3911 or sknecht@mt.gov.

Montana Homeland Security discourages any facility or governmental entity to provide information to anyone without the proper credentials, especially over the telephone. If a request for information is made we do encourage all facilities and governmental entities to contact your local law enforcement to verify the requester's credentials.

2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) – Statewide Results Released

The 2005 statewide results for the six population reports – High School, Grades 7-8, Native Americans on Reservations, Native Americans in Urban Schools, Alternative School, and Students with Disabilities – have been updated in table form as well as the full reports. Updates to the YRBS website will be completed by September 15. The high school data, which represents 96 percent of the schools randomly selected for the YRBS, is weighted data that is accurate to within plus-or-minus three percentage points. Hardcopies of the High School report will be mailed to district superintendents and the YRBS contact person at each school who was responsible for administering the survey. Limited hardcopies of the other five reports are available upon request. All reports, including School-Specific data, can be accessed and downloaded from www.opi.mt.gov/YRBS. OPI Contact: Susan Court, 444-3178 or scourt@mt.gov.

21st Century Community Learning Center Fall Meeting

The Fall Meeting for 21st Century Community Learning Center project directors will be held at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel here in Helena on September 7-8. The meeting will provide an

opportunity for directors to share best practices, model programs, and ideas for continuously improving the quality of their programs. In addition, we have presentations on data collection and reporting, prevention activities, and health and physical education/activities. OPI Contact Gary Pfister, (406) 444-3000 or gpfister@mt.gov.

School Discipline Data Collection

This is the collection of school discipline data that includes all incidents that occur between July 1, 2005, and June 30, 2006, and:

- Result in an out-of-school suspension or expulsion, regardless of the length of time, for any enrolled student; or
- Involve weapons, drugs or violence in which the perpetrator is a non-student (someone not enrolled in the school such as a former student who has graduated or dropped out, or someone unknown to the school).

The School Discipline Data Collection application will open up for data entry around the middle of September and remain open until the due date for this data collection, which is June 30, 2006. The specific date for the application to open will be posted on the OPI Web page at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schooldisciplinedc/>. This type of data has been collected from schools for the past three years and the online application has been available for data entry for the last two years. School districts are encouraged to enter data into the online application on an ongoing basis throughout the school year to reduce the amount of time that must be spent on this task at the end of the school year.

The only change to the type of data being collected is the revision of an already existing incident code to specifically target incidents that involve bullying. The code is 1800, Harassment, Nonsexual, and the title for this code has been revised to read:

1800 Harassment, Bullying, Intimidation (nonsexual): Repeatedly annoying or attacking a student or group of students or other personnel which creates an intimidating or hostile educational or work environment.

The online application has been revised slightly to be more user-friendly and online help is now available that targets the specific area the user is working in. A user manual will be available on the Web at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schooldisciplinedc/>.

For additional information regarding the application contact Marion Erp (444-1951/ e-mail: merp@mt.gov) or Pat Reichert (444-4430/ e-mail: preichert@mt.gov). For assistance with passwords, contact the OPI Help Desk (444-3448).

School Nutrition Program

Sponsor and Site Information due September 30

Schools participating in the School Nutrition Programs in the 2005-06 school year must enter their sponsor and site information into the new School Nutrition Programs Internet software program by October 1, 2005. Thanks to all who have entered the information early. Schools were mailed their new User ID and Password in July. If you need assistance, please contact: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501

Start Verification by October 1

The verification process has significant changes this year. The verification packets were mailed at the beginning of August. Verification must be completed by November 15, 2005. The Summary of Verification form is due to the School Nutrition Programs office by December 15, 2005. For more information: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501

Changes in Claiming Requirements

This year, schools must submit their claims for reimbursement on a school by school (site specific) basis. This is different than in the past, when schools were only required to submit one claim for the whole school district. This change may require schools to change their method of counting. Schools should also remember that if they served meals 10 or fewer days in August, those meals should be included in the September claim for reimbursement that is due October 10, 2005. For more information: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501

New Food Service Managers and/or School Clerks

School Nutrition Programs provides training for new food service managers and school clerks who deal with the School Nutrition Programs. Please notify us when you have a new food service manager so that we may provide prompt technical assistance to answer questions and ensure that program requirements are met. School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501

Foodservice Manager Trainings

These trainings are geared toward foodservice managers and provide something for everyone, both new and experienced managers. Topics will include what to expect during a review, requirements for your program(s), tips and tricks for filling out paperwork, and a chance to exchange ideas with other foodservice managers. Look for more information in late summer/early fall. These half-day trainings are tentatively planned for October 21, in coordination with the HACCP trainings (listed below). If you would like to sign up or need more information: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501

School Nutrition Administrative Training

This training is geared towards school administrators, clerks and secretaries. Learn about changes in requirements for free and reduced applications, verification, HACCP, School Wellness Policies; learn about the new Internet software program, and much more. These trainings will be held in Helena, Missoula, Billings, and Havre near the end of September. If you would like to sign up, or need more information: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501

Food Safety/HACCP Plan Training and Guidance

All schools participating in the School Nutrition Programs must have a school food safety program based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) in place by the end of school year 2005-06. School HACCP is very easy to understand and plan. It is recommended that participants attend a ServSAFE training offered by county sanitarians, MSU Extension or food distribution companies prior to HACCP training. The first set of regional HACCP trainings will be held in Billings, Sidney, Missoula, Havre, and Bozeman on Thursday, October 20, 2005 (school in-service). Spring trainings (2006) are planned in Great Falls, Miles City, Kalispell and Butte, with the exact date to be determined. Fall workshop registration information will be sent to all schools after September 5, 2005. For more information:

Team Nutrition Program
Debi Miller
(406) 994-5641 ext. 3

Team Nutrition Program
Katie Bark
(406) 994-5641 ext. 1

Regional Cost Control Classes “Making the Bottom Line a Top Priority”

This is a great opportunity for foodservice managers, clerks, and administrators to “team up” to learn effective strategies for running a cost-effective foodservice. Regional classes will be offered if a substantial number (5-10) of schools indicate an interest in attending. Potential sites

include (but are not limited to) Great Falls, Missoula, and Billings. One-on-one assistance is also available. For more information: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501

Best Practice Awards

Congratulations to the following three* Montana local educational agencies that were nominated for the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Best Practice Awards (2004-05) for their efforts to provide superior meal programs to children.

- ❖ The Helena Rocky Mountain Development Council was nominated for a Best Practice Award in the category of reaching needy children in the summer.
- ❖ Seeley Lake Elementary was nominated for a Best Practice Award in the category of Increasing School Breakfast Program Access.
- ❖ Libby School District was nominated for a Best Practice Award in the category of Healthy School Nutrition Environment.

*There was not a nomination for a Best Practice Award in the category of Increasing Fruit/Vegetable Consumption.

If your school foodservice does a great job in one of these categories, and you would like to nominate them for next year's Best Practice Awards, please contact: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501

HIV/AIDS/STD Program

Peer Educator's HIV/AIDS/STD Training

Training designed to provide teams of high school students with information and materials intended to diminish risky sexual behaviors will occur at the Wingate Inn in Helena on September 26-27. The two-day training will provide teens with resources that will assist in educating their peers about abstinence, self-esteem and the risks involved if youth choose to become sexually active. The training costs will be covered by OPI for one advisor and a team of 3-4 high school students from each school to attend. Maximum class size will be 30. Brochures detailing the training were mailed in early August to Family & Consumer Science teachers. Interested advisors should contact Susan Court at 406-444-3178 or scourt@mt.gov to register their team by Friday, September 2.

Driver Education/Advanced Driver Education

Annual Traffic Education Payments

The OPI distributed \$900,000 from Driver's License Fees to 147 school districts offering state approved Traffic Education programs. During the 2004 - 2005 school year, 10,421 students completed traffic education. District costs were partially offset by state reimbursement amounting to \$86.36 per pupil.

The Traffic Education Reimbursement for 2004 - 2005 is posted at the following link: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/payments/index.html>. If you have questions please contact Fran Penner-Ray at 444-4432 M - TH 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

GDL (Graduated Driver License)

A one-page fact sheet on the GDL is available online at www.opi.mt.gov/drivedred. This resource was developed specifically for schools and traffic educators who are likely to receive questions about the new law that goes into effect July 1, 2006. An interagency team of folks are working on implementing the teen graduated driver license that was adopted by the legislature in the last session. Other additional resources for implementing the law are being developed and will be available prior to the law taking effect. Contact David Huff at (406) 444-4396 and dhuff@mt.gov for additional information.

Other Education News

Montana Historical Society to Publish a New Montana History Textbook

The Montana Historical Society is currently in the process of writing a comprehensive Montana-history textbook, designed for the 7th/8th-grade level. The textbook will be accompanied by a web-site Teacher's Guide. Copies of this new textbook will be available from a commercial publisher in the spring of 2007.

Textbook Available for Loan

In the meantime, the Society will loan to Montana teachers classroom copies of the Merrill-Maker textbook MONTANA: PEOPLE AND THEIR STORIES (2004). Copies of this interim textbook can be obtained by signing a loan agreement with the Historical Society that stipulates that the books will be returned to the Society in the summer of 2007. Schools borrowing the books are responsible for shipping charges both to and from Helena.

Arrangements can be made to borrow the classroom copies by contacting Dave Walter, the Research Historian at the Montana Historical Society: dawalter@mt.gov or 406-444-4015.

Montana State Library Receives Grant to Recruit Librarians

The Montana State Library received notice that it has been selected for a \$460,444 Recruiting and Educating Librarians for the 21st Century award from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services. It is the second grant the State Library has received from IMLS for recruitment purposes.

The three-year grant, Professional Education and Employment for Librarians II or PEEL II, will fund a statewide promotion/recruitment campaign designed to attract Montana residents to the library profession, with an emphasis on recruiting more Native American librarians. Ten Montana residents will receive \$25,000 scholarships to attend graduate library school, and will be required to work in a Montana library for a minimum of two years following the program. Stipends will also be awarded to help libraries bring these new graduates into their communities.

Montana State Library was one of 36 successful grant applicants. A ten-member advisory committee that provides guidance with the recruitment campaign and application process will remain in place from the first grant cycle. Applications will be available in October of 2005. Scholarship applications will be due in February of 2006; selected applicants are required to begin school at the University of Washington Information School in the fall of 2006.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services anticipates the loss of as many as 58% of the current pool of professional librarians across the nation by 2019 and designed this grant program to help recruit a new generation of librarians. It recognizes the key role of libraries and librarians in maintaining the flow of information that is critical to support formal education, to guide commercial enterprise, and to strengthen individual decisions.

For more information about Montana's grant, please visit <http://msl.mt.gov/greatcareer> or contact Sue Jackson, Library Development Consultant at the Montana State Library at (406) 444-5350 or sujackson@mt.gov

NEA Foundation Award Helps Libraries Purchase Books

The NEA Foundation is providing a new award to help public schools serving economically disadvantaged students purchase books for school libraries. The Foundation makes these \$5,000 awards to practicing preK-12 teachers and education support professionals who are NEA members on behalf of NEA, with support from Warner Brothers, Inc. Two deadlines to submit an application: September 15, 2005 and February 1, 2006. To apply, visit www.neafoundation.org/grants.htm.

Matching Grants to Schools Available from the Montana Arts Council

The Montana Arts Council's Artists in Schools and Communities grant program offers matching grants to schools to bring in professional artists in the following discipline areas: Visual Arts, Media Arts, Traditional/Folk Arts, Performing Arts, and Literary Arts. The residencies must be for participatory workshops that teach the fundamental skills and knowledge of the art form. Special Project grants are also available to help pay for professional development workshops and curriculum development. For more information visit the website at http://art.mt.gov/schools/schools_aisc.asp or call Beck McLaughlin, Education Director, on the Arts Education Hotline, 1-800-282-3092.

Jobs for Montana's Graduates (JMG) has completed another successful year. The statistics for 2003-2004 are final after a year of follow-up for the seniors enrolled in JMG for school year 2003-2004.

In 2003-2004, JMG served 615 students in 41 high schools. There were 346 seniors and 269 non-seniors. JMG also served 250 students in (2) two out-of school programs, the Montana National Guard Youth Challenge Program and Yellowstone Youth Academy. As of May 31, 2005 (after the one year follow-up) JMG achieved the following results:

Performance Category	JAG Performance Goals	JMG Final Report as of May 31, 2005
• Senior graduation rate	90%	94.49%
• Senior positive outcome rate	80%	87.73%
• Senior job placement rate	60%	44.17%
• Senior post secondary education/training	na	42.64%
• Senior military service	na	6.44%
• Senior full-time placement rate	80%	92.36%
• Average wage at placement	na	\$7.01
• Non-senior return to school rate	70%	95.16%

The graduation rate for seniors in JMG on Reservation and Near Reservation schools was 94.81%. The senior positive outcome rate was 90.41%.

For more information, go to <http://wsd.dli.mt.gov/service/jmg.asp>. Contact Drea Brown, Department of Labor and Industry, at 444-0978.

Non-Discrimination Policy of the Office of Public Instruction

The Office of Public Instruction is committed to equal employment opportunity and nondiscriminatory access to all our programs and services, and will take necessary and appropriate steps to insure that the workplace and OPI programs and services are free of discrimination and sexual harassment. For information or to file a complaint, contact Kathy Bramer, OPI Title IX/EEO Coordinator at 406-444-3161 or kbramer@mt.gov.